1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

Arapahoes having fully as many children who have gray hair, it being seemingly an inherited quality in certain families. I have also seen the same thing in other tribes. In regard to the light hair, one of the old men said to me that when God made them He as a special mark of His pleasure took the silky tassel of the corn with which to make their hair. As a matter of fact this peculiarity is of recent date. Since 1804, when Lewis and Clarke spent their winters with this tribe, their liking for the white men of their party is a matter of record, and particularly of one or two of the men who had red hair and blue eyes." (P. 241.)

The above expressed opinion that those peculiarities were of "recent date," and Clarke's evident intention of referring them as to origin to the period of the Lewis and Clarke visit is, we believe, so far fetched as to be without any substantial basis. We have already seen and will hereinafter find further references to evidences which are indisputable to the effect that long before Lewis and Clarke saw the Mandans they had become renowned in the Canadian and eastern American country as "Bearded Whites" and as "Welsh Indians." Even Verendrye, as will be seen later on, knew of those reports and expressed disappointment that the Mandans were not much nearer white men in complexion than he found them to be.

Clarke concludes with the following:

Religious Phases. "They place calico and other cloths round the posts in their lodges as a gift to the god of timber to satisfy him for the spoilation, believing that it hurts a tree to be cut down; i. e., gives it physical pain. The tree is alive and its destruction is the destruction of life, but by giving something to God—making a sacrifice—it pleases Him and gives them good luck. This is a curious peculiarity of their religious belief, which is shared by no other tribe that I have ever met. Near the village and cultivated fields I saw poles fifteen or twenty feet long planted in the ground, with bundles of female clothing tied to these poles near the top. On inquiry they told me that these were gifts to the three Mandan medicine women, who keep the lodges for the sun—one where the sun rises, one at the zenith and one where the sun sets. These women never die, and the sun stops at their lodges to smoke. 'By watching closely,' said the old man, 'you can see that the sun stops for a short time just as he rises, the same at meridian, and he stays with the third at night.

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

We were told never to forget these women, and we make these gifts to them so that they will say a kind word for us.' Their oath is made by the moon or sun. After death they believe they go to the east, and claim that a man killed in battle is better treated, better liked, in the hereafter than one who dies of disease. They cling tenaciously to their old beliefs, customs and habits, and though they have adopted some of the manners of the Sioux and their own allies, the Arickarees and Gros Ventres, they are bitterly opposed to the ways of the whites.

Language Different from Sioux. In speaking of their language Mr. Mitchell says: 'I always contended that Mr. Gallatin was in error in supposing the Mandans and Sioux descended from the same stock. Mr. Kipp, who has been well acquainted with both tribes for upward of thirty years, and speaks both languages with great fluency and correctness, fully concurs with me in opinion. There are a few words that are somewhat similar in sound, but this Mr. Kipp accounts for by the fact of the Sioux and Mandans having been neighbors from time immemorable, and during intervals of peace visiting and intermarrying with each other.' Many of them now speak the Sioux language, and though I consider their vocal language as distinct and different from all others, still high authorities at present class it with the Sioux; that is, being with the same stock." (P. 242.)

From the "Collections of the American Antiquarian Society," Vol. II (Cambridge, 1836), we quote the following concerning the Mandans, in which they are spoken of as one of three tribes of the Minnetarees. What is said therein concerning the chief Big White and the Welsh theory will receive consideration later on.

"The Minetares (Minetaree and Minetaries) consist of three tribes, speaking three different languages which belong to a common stock. Its affinities with the Dahcota are but remote, but have appeared sufficient to entitle them to be considered as of the same family.

"Two of those tribes, the Mandans, whose numbers do not exceed fifteen hundred, and the stationary Minetaries, amounting to three thousand souls, including those called Annahwas, cultivate the soil and live in villages situated on or near the Missouri, between the forty-seventh and forty-eighth degrees of north latitude. They are kept in a state of perpetual alarm by the Assiniboines, the Tetons, the Rapid Indians and other erratic

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

younger women called them and offered them property. "Then we adopted them and called them our daughters." Sometimes it happened that a single individual wished to join. In such a case she might buy a head band from a father's sister and become an additional member without replacing anyone. This, however, was not the regular way of entering the society.

In Hides-and-eats' time, there were two male head-singers, who called in five young men and taught them to sing, for which they received a compensation and were called "fathers" by the young men. From another statement by the same authority it would appear that the five men bought the right of singing and drumming from their predecessors in very much the same way as the young women bought the right to membership.

The officers of the society included a leader wearing a necklace of bear claws attached to otterskin; a rear officer with the same badge; and two middle officers with a loose-fitting white-shell necklace hanging down a few inches below the neck in front. There was one special member who surrendered to the society her earth-lodge to dance in; in Hides-and-eats' time this member's name was One-corn-seed. Calf-woman, who was one of the officers wearing a shell necklace, kept the dance-lodge, because her parents loved her dearly and never refused her anything. The ceremonial dance lasted four nights, the actual dancing beginning before sunset. The members were expected to remain in the earth-lodge during these four nights.[1] Some women, however, would clandestinely absent themselves and go home. As soon as the other members discovered their absence, they went to the woman's house, and sang outside, "Our friend, get up and come out here again." The drummers beat their drums, and the members, if necessary, seized the truant and brought her back to the dance lodge by force. The close of the performance was marked by a cleansing ceremony. The musicians tied together peppermint (?) stalks, and with these they brushed the members' bodies, from the shoulders down. The object of this was to remove the mysterious (xo'pinic) properties with which the members were endowed while dancing. In Calf-woman's time only one man, Bad-shirt performed this ceremony; he was paid with calico goods and food. Painted-up said the brusher was the singer of the Bird ceremony. The ceremonial cleansing took place only after the performances of the three *sacred* women's societies, that is, the River women, Goose women and White Buffalo women organizations.

Two-chiefs said that during the four nights' performance the head bands were suspended from a rawhide rope passing round the earth-lodge, and

[1] That is to say, they were not to sleep with their husbands. But if any member had a little child at home, she might go there to attend to its wants. In this case she was brought back to the lodge before daybreak.

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
NQ17 Mandan NQ17
Hidatsa NQ14

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575
[301]

members were expected to sleep below these headdresses. During part of the dance the women wearing bearclaw necklaces, (that is, the leaders and rear officers) performed alone, and were then supposed to present gifts to their own aunts or uncles. The middle officers also performed when a special song was sung, and they were expected to make a similar distribution of gifts. At the conclusion of the whole ceremony, the members sat down in a circle and placed their crowns in front of them. A man whose personal medicine was the Eagle or the Thunder was summoned to purge first the headdresses, and then the women themselves. Then, after the removal of the eagle feathers, which were saved for another occasion, the head bands were taken to the outskirts of the village, and abandoned there.

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Buffalo-bird-woman gave the following account of the purchase of the River Women, or, as she called it, Grass Crown, society. Her statements, she said, also applied to the Skunk society. A male "friend" led the procession of purchasers, carrying a pipe[1] to the lodge of the sellers. The girls or women pretended to weep in feigned expectation of the possibility that their offer to buy the society might be declined by their mothers. On the first evening they merely stated their request, saying "Mothers, we desire to get this society, we do not know how to get it." As soon as the mothers had consented to give up their society, they pretended to cry, saying, "We have lost our songs." Then there followed ten nights during which the "mothers" were entertained by the purchasers. On the first of these nights the aunts[2] danced four times, whereupon each buyer brought a kettleful of food to her aunt. This was repeated every following night. On the tenth night, each daughter gave a special present to her mother and put a pipe before her, which was smoked, as before, by a male friend, and then returned. On the next evening each mother called her daughter to her own lodge and gave her a new suit of clothes, including head band, dress, and robe. It is not clear whether it was on this or another occasion that the mothers served food for their daughters, the statement being that this took place after the first dance by the new Grass Crown women. If two or three candidates had the same woman for their mother, the latter was not a real aunt of all of them. If the mother, in such a case was an officer, only one of her daughters received the office. When Buffalo-bird-woman bought the society, there were four women having a joint mother, who had considerable difficulty in getting together the requisite amount of clothing for the four novices. The officers were not selected. It depended merely on the novice's mother whether a novice became an officer. If the mother happened to be an officer, her badge and office were simply transferred to the purchaser.

[1] This pipe was smoked by a male "friend" of the sellers.

[2] See p. 227.

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
NQ17 Mandan NQ17
Hidatsa NQ14

happened to be an officer, her badge and office were simply transferred to the purchaser.

The Hidatsa derived this society from the Mandan, but did not consider it so sacred as the Mandan did. Thus, as stated above, the Mandan rule was that women must not sleep with their husbands but must remain in the dance lodge during the four nights of the dance. Among the Hidatsa only the unmarried members regularly stayed in the dance lodge overnight. The married women went home, unless their husbands consented to let them follow the Mandan regulation.

Although Buffalo-bird-woman denied that the dance was regarded as sacred by her people, two features seem to have a religious character. In the first place, the annual performance took place after someone having had a dream to that effect had given a feast to the organization. Secondly, the performance closed with the ceremonial sweating and cleansing. The women took off their grass head bands, removed the feathers from them, piled up the crowns on the top of the sweat lodge, and went in to sweat, a few at a time. Then a man approached, holding in his hand some sage-brush with which he brushed off the sweat lodge, singing a song. All the women rose and faced him, and he brushed off the women, one by one, singing a song for each member. This power, my informant imagined, had been acquired by purchase.

Cheyenne[1] Women Society.

Young-beaver who had entered the River Women society when not quite 20, bought the Cheyenne Women membership, with some thirty of her comrades, at the age of a little over 30. She still considers herself a member of the Cheyenne Women society.

The name of this organization (cō′ota mī ō′xat'e) indicates the source from which it is said to have been derived by the Mandan. Buffalo-bird-woman said that she first heard of the society about 56 years ago (1911), and that she joined as the only Hidatsa woman, her father having been asked for his consent. Any member who chose might assume men's garb. Some dressed like the Dakota, tying their front braids with otterskin, while others affected the long switches of the Crow. From two to four male singers were also chosen. At a dance of the organization a man carrying an eagle feather fan acted as leader, followed by the women in single file. At the intonation of a certain song, the leader held his fan close to his face,

[1] One interpreter translated the native word "Sioux."